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author cannot even be conjectured. From the language I should judge that it had been written in the preceding century. J. O. Halliwell, editing it in 1844, had no doubt that it was a translation of the Conte du Graal. By calling it one of the earliest known sources of the legend, I mean that it is *not* a translation of any part of the Conte du Graal, nor of any other romance that has come down to us. It therefore represents a phase of the legend which, with those represented in the mabinogi and in Chrestien's part of the Conte du Graal, may be considered as the earliest that have survived. That the author of Sir Perceval had read and in some respects imitated the poem of Chrestien, there can be no disputing, but the divergences are so numerous and important, that it is reasonable to attribute them to some unknown original, which had an influence upon the English writer equal to that exercised by Chrestien.

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#### OLD ENGLISH POETRY.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—In the February number of MOD. LANG. NOTES appeared an interesting comparison, by Professor Cook, of Shelley's "Lines written among the Euganean Hills" and the same poetic conception found in Old Norse.

His statement as to the "essential poetic quality of our Old English verse" is true and timely. No where in early germanic poetry is such a beautiful conception of Nature found, poetic figures that are so simple and yet so grand. The following passages suggest themselves:

*oð þät hrefn blaca, heofones wynne  
blið-heort bodode. þä cöm beorht sunne  
scacan ofer grundas.*

Beowulf, l. 1802.

*nê þis ne dagað ðastan, nê hêr draca ne  
flêogeð;* l. 3.

*hräfen wandrode.*

*sweart ond seato-brün.* l. 34.

"Finnsburg Fragment."

After reading these lines, in or away from their natural setting, how easy it is to feel the sentiment contained in the following:

Mid the mountains Euganean  
I stood listening to the poan  
With which the legion'd rooks did hail  
The Sun's uprise majestic,  
Gathering round with wings all hoar,  
Though the dewy mist they soar  
Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven  
Bursts,

The lines cited from the "Finnsburg Fragment" find, perhaps, a more suggestive parallel in von Eichendorff's "Eginhard und Emma":

Es ist schon wieder Abend, wunderbar  
verzerrt die Welt da draussen sich; wie Drachen  
Mit grauen Nebelschweifn übern Walde  
Schlingt sich der Höhenrauch, und drunter liegts  
So lauernd still, wie finsterner Rache Grimm.

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#### THE MEANING OF THE WORD "CHINA."

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—The word *china* has been referred to by Mr. F. M. Page in MOD. LANG. NOTES, Vol. 8, at page 26, who says it is the "common name given to native women on the camps," in the Argentine Republic. Also, by Dr. Karl Lentzner at page 85 of the same volume, who says:

"With regard to the word *china*, in Guatemala and Nicaragua it has quite a different meaning from that known elsewhere; for example in Peru, where it means a half-caste of Indian and European parents. In Guatemala *china*, is the nursemaid, and *chinear* means 'to look after children.'"

*China* is not Spanish but a Quichua word, and Garcilaso de la Vega, whose mother was a *palla*, or woman of the Inca blood, and his father one of the *conquistadores* says in his 'Comentarios reales del Perú,' parte primera, foja 68. 1., "China llman á la Doncella muchacha de servicio," that is: a maid servant is called *china*.

China is really a Quichua word and means female, *hembra*, and is used to distinguish the sex of animals. The book is not at hand just now but the word may be found in Clement R. Markham's 'Grammar and Dictionary of the Quichua,' published by Trübner.

In connection with the word it may be said that all through the Argentine Republic it is used for a servant—a woman of the lower class; it is used in the diminutive *chinita*, and a man who is given to company of that kind is said to be *muy chinitero*.

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